

**Evergreen Fire District
Board of Trustees
Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Regular Board Meeting of March 1, 2021 – 6:00 pm**

To Be Held Remotely via Google Meet:

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For public comment please email brodie@vitalogyeducation.com

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

Chairman Verworn calls meeting to order at 6:14 pm

TRUSTEES PRESENT:

Station 81: Vice Chairman DePaul, Fallon (present at 6:22 pm)

Via Google Meet: Chairman Verworn and Connolly

TRUSTEES ABSENT:

Brockman

RECOGNIZE PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE:

At Station 81: Chief Williams

PUBLIC COMMENT:

At this time, public may comment on any public matter that is not on the Agenda of the Meeting and that is within the jurisdiction of the District.

Chairman Verworn states:

"I'm going to go ahead and speak as a member of the public, here. Um, I have been the Board Chair for the past 3 years, um... my term is expired, I believe last month, and I was going to re-sign up again and in September I started an EMS education business and it did not have any sort of a um, issue or conflict of interest with myself and what Evergreen Fire did...although it was kind of along those same lines. But, recently I have chosen to go an additional direction. Uh, I have purchased an ambulance and after some thought and discussion with my wife and some other individuals, we have chosen to start our own transport service; not as 911 but as in doing special events and uh, possibly...Inter-facilities, there's nothing that says that I'm going to but I do believe that in order to eliminate any sort of a conflict of interest and for the betterment of the department tonight will be my last meeting. I'm currently not doing any business. My ambulance is here but it has not been released by, or should I say 'blessed by' the State of Montana to go out and do my thing. But, probably within the next 30 days it will be. Uh, I will...I'm gonna go ahead and step down from my position after tonight's meeting. If things do go forward and things are well and I speak with the Chief and others...uh, later on down the road if it's not found to be a conflict, I would like to be reconsidered maybe once again, uh...to join the fire board. But, for now, uh, I will uh, I will step down at this point. Trying to run 2 businesses at one time too has made my life extremely hectic and last week or last month was a demonstration of that. I could have been a little bit better communicator with Tony and a couple of others. I thought some messages I had, had been, uh...that we had canceled the meeting but it didn't get to a couple of people. Evergreen and the Board deserve somebody that's going to be fully engaged and all in and right now I am not that person. So, uh...I'm an ardent supporter of the Evergreen Fire Department; the Fire District; and all it's members and what it does and it has been an honor and a privilege to serve on this Board; to serve with each one of you; to get to know you; everything that I've learned, uh, from each one of you as individuals, I've learned all so much and I thank you for that. So...."

Chief Williams states that while he was aware that Verworn purchased an ambulance, he was not aware that he was going to be considering a transport service and it was unlikely that the District could defend having a Board member in direct competition with the District for transports.

FINANCIALS:

Approve December 2020 and January 2021 financials

Chief Williams states that the District is up 35% in EMS revenue over last year.

Fallon asks what the 'transfers out' are: \$14,000 for EMS. Chief Williams states he can have an answer by tomorrow. Fallon points out the cash balance of 7204 and what Ashley has reconciled. He questions whether the amount will be enough to continue to operate for the next 2 ½ months until the tax revenue is available (approximately mid May). Chief Williams states much of the cost has been one time purchases and not recurring. Fallon inquires what the process is for uncleared checks.

Fallon states there is \$43,000 in 7207 and the budget that was approved mentioned the transfer of \$18,000 to 7250. He states the budget for 7207 shouldn't exceed \$20,000. Fallon asks if Chief Williams wants to discuss the meeting that was had with Evergreen Water and he states that Fire Marshall Covington was present for that meeting and that he only caught the end of the meeting but states he can speak for Evergreen Water in that they have no interest in maintaining the hydrants at this point and requests that Evergreen Fire District continues to do the maintenance. Chief Williams states that it begins to be a problem for EFD when a call comes in and during wildland fire season. He states the need for the hydrant maintenance person(s) to not be involved with Fire or EMS and raises several questions such as the need for a dedicated chase rig, impact on insurance, and etc.

Motion; Fallon, to transfer \$18,000 from 7207 to 7250 as presented in the budget that was approved for the fiscal year; Second, DePaul; motion passes (Brockman absent).

Note: This motion was made by Fallon and passed during the January 4th meeting and is recorded in the minutes. Administrative Assistant could not ask the County to make the transfer without the signed meeting minutes of January 4th. Signatures did not finally happen until last weekend; March 7th).

Motion; Fallon to approve the checks and accept the financial statements for December 2020 and January 2021; Second by DePaul; motion passes (Brockman absent).

PAST ITEMS/UPDATES:

1. Approve meeting minutes of January 4th, 2021

Motion; DePaul to approve meeting minutes of Jan. 4th 2021; Second by Connolly; motion passes (Brockman absent)

2. Motion for Correction

(skipped; need clarification on what needs correction.)

3. Update on employee manual

Chief Williams states a 3 hour meeting is scheduled with Kim to attempt to finish up with the policy handbook and move on to building an 'appendix A' and 'appendix B' which will be the administrative portion. He reiterates that a major problem has been separating the policy from the procedure from the current handbook. Kim is removing all of the procedural aspects and putting it into appendixes and can be reserved for administration, only such as any disciplinary actions. The attorney states that as part of administrative rule it should not be 'spelled out' in an employee handbook. The current handbook is 11 years old is being reformatted as well as updated. After the appendixes are complete, she will begin to look at the board by-laws.

4. Fire Chief Purchasing Authorization

Trustee Connolly sent a questionnaire email to Trustee Fallon and Chief Williams and Trustee Brockman (absent) was supposed to do the same for Trustees DePaul and Verworn who claim they did not receive anything from Trustee Brockman. Trustee Connolly states he will send the questionnaire to Trustee DePaul and not to Verworn who has resigned after this meeting. He has given Trustees until March 10th to complete the questionnaire and email it back to him. It will then be compiled into a form and disseminated out for the meeting in April to be discussed.

5. Auditor RFP Selection

Trustee Fallon states there were 2 responses to the RFP that was sent out. One was received from 'Anderson' who included prices for the next 3 years with the starting bid being \$15,700. JCCS sent quotes for the same time period starting at \$10,700 with a cost below Anderson of between \$5000 and \$6000 each year. Fallon recommends initiating the services of JCCS per their proposal as soon as possible.

Motion; Fallon to engage the services of JCCS to do the EFD audit for the years ending June 30th 2020, June 30th 2021 and June 30th 2022 as proposed in their RFP response; Second by DePaul; motion passes (Brockman absent).

CHIEF'S REPORT:

1. 2020 EMS Revenue Graph

Chief Williams states he received data from Pintler for the 2020 Payer Mixed Reports. He specifically points out that contract revenue of 36% of the total. He states it is the greatest revenue source for the District for EMS and that the report proves that it is important for the District to maintain the many high profile contracts that currently exist. 911 Medicares pays a large portion of that percentage at 32%. Private insurances are paying at only 5.5%. He states that given the demographics it is extremely important to continue to foster the IFT contracts. Chief Williams states it took Pintler 6 weeks to work through the data to put the report together due to being 'bundled'. Fallon asks what 'bundled' means. Chief Williams states there is 'bundled commercial' and 'bundled auto' and gives the example of someone being in an MVA in Evergreen. The auto insurance of whomever was at fault would generally pay for any of the transport services for themselves or any other injured party and will negotiate it out to see if they have private insurance or Medicare or Medicaid. Often times, by the time the claim is settled (at least 6 months later) there are several payers in one single claim. Fallon asks if there is a way Pintler can provide the graph in a dollar amount as well as percentages. Chief Williams states it was probable because she would have had to have percentages based off of something. Verworn states that he understands it to be a matter of 'who gets there first' determines who gets their money first in a 'bundled' situation like an MVA where there is a 'pool' of money in a claim. He states that is all the more reason to ensure personnel are getting their reports done within 24 hours. Fallon asks if it is a problem with personnel not getting reports done in a timely manner. Chief Williams says that the State 'requires' them to be completed in 24 hours but also acknowledges it is impractical at times because it's difficult to do with a heavy call volume. He states that he doesn't allow personnel to go past a week with incomplete reports to Pintler.

2. December 2020 and January 2021 Call Volume

A) Comparison Incident Count by Weekday/Hour (all zones) for December 2020 and January 2021

B) Comparison Incident Statistics for December 2020 and January 2021

December 2019 vs. December 2020 shows a 55 call increase primarily attributed to EMS.

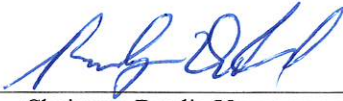
245 calls 2019 vs. 300 in 2020. January through December of 2019 there were 2749 EMS calls vs. 3159 EMS calls 2020. Fire calls were up approximately 20 calls. There was an overall call difference of 438 between 2019 and 2020. There was a 176 call difference for IFT's with 1582 IFT's in 2020 vs. 1406 the prior year. He states that Covid calls are being coded so he will be able to provide that data. He states there were 3537 calls for service. Kalispell did 4200 calls comparatively last year. EFD has gone into the City of Kalispell 357 times in 2019 and 514 times in 2020. This is after adding 4 personnel to their roster and it has not decreased the mutual aid requests. Verworn states that EFD call volume is probably even closer than those numbers because Kalispell is including duplicated calls. Chief Williams states it wasn't that long ago that there were only 2 personnel on shift before going to 4 and that the District has been able to do quite a lot with a lot less (staffing). He states that District personnel have been remarkable but it is taking a toll on them. He states he has had to fill 4 old positions last month and has had good providers with valuable experience leave; some to less busy departments. He tells the Board that he wants them to know that there is not a lot of down time for personnel. They are extremely busy. He states he had to table the discussion of converting IFT personnel to hourly due to the attorney needing to focus on completing the handbook before starting the logistics of figuring it out. He states it is still on the radar and will be an agenda item again in the future. In closing, he states that it can't be forgotten that the 36% of contract revenue is attributed to IFT personnel and is looking forward to presenting data to support bringing on 2 or 4 more IFT personnel and converting IFT personnel status to hourly.

At this time, Chairman Verworn states to Trustee Fallon (who entered the meeting after he announced his resignation) his intention to resign after the meeting due to conflict of interest since he will be starting a transport service. He states his term expired in February which Fallon states is not correct and that his term doesn't expire until May 31st. Fallon recommends that Verworn contact the County Elections Department to determine what his next step is to resign his commission. Fallon states that the District should receive notification of terms and that Cheri should be asked if notice is mailed to the Dept.

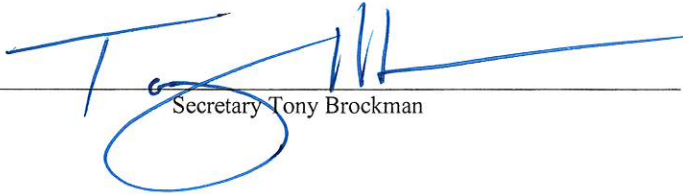
(Admin Note: The County Elections Department does notify EFD of trustee term expiration dates. Cheri scanned and attached the letter to an email and sent it out to everyone on January 11th; the day the letter was received.)

Adjourn 8:11 pm

The President of the Board of Trustees, as presiding officer of any meeting of the Board of Trustees, may close the meeting during the time the discussion relates to a matter of individual privacy; and, then, if, and only if, the presiding officer determines that the demands of individual privacy clearly exceed the merits of public disclosure. The right of individual privacy may be waived by the individual about whom the discussion pertains; and, in that event, the meeting must be open.



Chairman Brodie Verworn or Vice Chair Randy DePaul



Secretary Tony Brockman